







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

NR 1/31/1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Old City Waterworks (8Le495)

**SEE SITE FILE STAFF FOR  
ORIGINAL PHOTO(S) OR MAP(S)**

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER Northeast corner of East Gaines Street and South  
Gadsden Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2

CITY, TOWN

Tallahassee

VICINITY OF

STATE

Florida

CODE

12

COUNTY

Leon

CODE

073

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

☐ DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

☐ STRUCTURE

☐ SITE

☐ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

☒ PUBLIC

☐ PRIVATE

☐ BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

☐ IN PROCESS

☐ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

☒ OCCUPIED

☐ UNOCCUPIED

☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

☒ YES: RESTRICTED

☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED

☐ NO

**PRESENT USE**

☐ AGRICULTURE

☐ COMMERCIAL

☐ EDUCATIONAL

☐ ENTERTAINMENT

☐ GOVERNMENT

☐ INDUSTRIAL

☐ MILITARY

☐ MUSEUM

☐ PARK

☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

☐ RELIGIOUS

☐ SCIENTIFIC

☐ TRANSPORTATION

☒ OTHER Storage

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME City of Tallahassee

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall

CITY, TOWN

Tallahassee

VICINITY OF

STATE

Florida

32304

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Leon County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Tallahassee

STATE

Florida

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Tallahassee Capitol Center Survey

DATE

1975

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management

CITY, TOWN

Tallahassee

STATE

Florida

1

# 7 DESCRIPTION

LE495

## CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT  
☐ GOOD  
☐ FAIR  
☒ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Tallahassee Old City Water Works is a roughly rectangular structure whose south side faces on East Gaines Street. It is a utilitarian civil engineering structure, and its configuration was dictated by the development of the city whose water needs it served. The present structure dates from 1923-24 and may contain portions of earlier masonry structures dating from at least 1909.<sup>1</sup> The site, which occupies the southwestern quarter of Town Lot 30, has been occupied by water works structures since at least 1890, and the works were used to provide Tallahassee with water until 1958.<sup>2</sup>

The first structure to occupy the site was built by the privately owned Tallahassee Water Works Company.<sup>3</sup> It was of frame construction and was built to serve as a pumping station.<sup>4</sup> The structure's design was probably dictated by the necessity for housing a fifty horsepower steam pumping engine, a sixty horsepower boiler, and other ancillary machinery.<sup>5</sup> The original frame structure had been replaced by another by 1903.<sup>6</sup> The newer structure served water wells which had been drilled on the site, and its configuration seems to have resulted from that intended use.<sup>7</sup> The first masonry structure, in place by 1909, apparently continued the trend of design dictated by function.<sup>8</sup> Its successors or enlargements followed that tradition until new building activity on the main structure ceased about 1924.<sup>9</sup>

The exterior of the present water works structure is of stuccoed masonry; the interior walls are exposed brick. Fenestration appears irregular; however, it is likely that it was intended to be regular within each successive addition to the original masonry building. Roof configuration varies. The larger portion of the roof is gabled and covered with pressed metal shingles. Two features, taking the forms of steeply sloped truncated pyramids, accent the gable roof over areas where pumping machinery was placed. The larger section of the structure is one story, while the portion to the east, facing East Gaines Street, is two stories. The roof features, located on the north-south section, rise slightly above the roof level of the two story section. The features are also covered with pressed metal shingles.

<sup>1</sup>Sanborn Map and Publishing Company. Sanborn Maps of Tallahassee. (New York, 1890-1926), 1909, 1916, 1926 editions.

<sup>2</sup>William F. Jacobs, "Water from Cornfield to State Capitol," Typescript photocopy (Tallahassee, n.d.), p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>Tallahassee, Florida, City Council, Minute Book for February 23, 1883, October 9, 1895, February 18, 1889.

(Continued)

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<sup>4</sup>Sanborn . . . , Sanborn Maps, 1890 edition.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Sanborn . . . , Sanborn Maps, 1903 edition.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Sanborn . . . , Sanborn Maps, 1909 edition.

<sup>9</sup>Sanborn . . . , Sanborn Maps, 1909, 1916, 1926.

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The Tallahassee Water Works Company received its Florida charter and began operations in March, 1889. The company leased a part of what is now Myers Park to gain access to springs and a suitable reservoir site. It also purchased a portion of town lot 30, site of the present structure, in 1890.<sup>3</sup> The 1890 Sanborn map of the area indicates an engine and pump house standing on that site; by 1895, another pump and a cistern had been installed there.<sup>4</sup> The system also included the (Myers Park) reservoir and an iron standpipe, located on a prominence in the downtown area.<sup>5</sup>

The original water works system was completed by June, 1890.<sup>6</sup> Within a year, City Council decided to withhold a portion of its payment to the company due to lack of adequate pressure in the system and complaints about potability of the water.<sup>7</sup> Continued disagreements between the city and the Tallahassee Water Works Company were punctuated by withheld remunerations and company attempts to answer complaints by improving and expanding its plant on lot 30. The company undertook considerable improvements in 1903-4 and 1905-6; the assessment on the lot 30 plant increased from twenty-six to thirty-six thousand dollars during that period.<sup>8</sup> By the end of 1906, the water works company was inclined to dispose of the system. Its parent company, the American Pipe Manufacturing Company of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, sold the system to the City of Tallahassee for seventy-five thousand dollars in 1907.<sup>9</sup>

The city expanded the existing lot 30 facilities and extended water service to portions of Tallahassee then under development. By 1915, three new wells had been sunk at the site. The water works was electrified in 1917, a result of improvements to the city

(Continued)

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

LE495

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1923

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Tallahassee's Old City Water Works is significant as the remnant of "modern" civil engineering improvements implemented in Tallahassee, Florida, during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It is a visible symbol of the concern and sense of civic responsibility exhibited by many municipal governments of that period.

The City of Tallahassee was specifically created to serve as capitol of the Florida Territory in 1824. Although it continued to serve as the seat of government after Florida joined the Union in 1845, Tallahassee grew slowly; its population in 1900 was only 2,981.<sup>1</sup> No centralized water supply system served city residents until 1890. They used wells and cisterns until that time. However, the desirability of a centralized water delivery system became apparent in the decades following the Civil War, as city leaders began addressing the related problems of fire protection and pure drinking water.

Tallahassee City Council initially acted to finance a municipally-owned system; however, voters defeated a bonding proposal for that purpose in 1885. City Council then worked to improve the municipal light and gas plants during the next two years, then acted to bring another water works bond issue to a vote in February, 1889. However, on the eve of that election, Tallahassee City Council granted a water works franchise to R.L. Bennett and Company of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Council also granted a franchise for construction of street railways to Bennett and Company at the same time.<sup>2</sup>

The water works franchise was typical of many agreements worked out between local governments and private businesses for provision of municipal services during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. R.L. Bennett and Company, organized as the Tallahassee Water Works Company, had the exclusive right to construct, operate, and maintain a water works system in the City of Tallahassee. It received a fee for services rendered to municipal buildings and for making water available for fire protection through a hydrant system. The Tallahassee Water Works Company also had the exclusive right to provide water service to city residents. Such rights were contingent upon regular delivery of a supply of pure water at a satisfactory pressure.

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electrical plant. A circular concrete reservoir of four hundred thousand gallons capacity was constructed on lot 30 shortly thereafter.<sup>10</sup> A series of building enlargements (see physical description section) and several engineering improvements were made during the same period, and by 1931 a total of five wells existed on the site.

Well No. 5, located in a separate structure behind the main water works building, was put into operation in 1931. It represented a departure from the city's normal practice, in that a horizontal pump was used in place of the usual vertical shaft pumps. The Well No. 5 pump was situated nearly ninety-eight feet beneath ground level; employees used an elevator to service the pump and its ancillary machinery.<sup>11</sup>

The lot 30 site remained in use until 1958. It served as part of a unified city water system until pile driving activities connected with public building construction rendered Well No. 5 unsafe for use.<sup>12</sup> The City of Tallahassee has retained possession of the site and has used its buildings for storage and repair facilities since the late 1950s.

<sup>1</sup>Tallahassee Capitol Center Survey: Report, Division of Archives, History and Records Management, Bureau of Historic Sites and Properties, Miscellaneous Project Report Series No. 30 (Tallahassee, 1975), p. 26.

<sup>2</sup>Tallahassee, Florida, City Council, Minute Book for February 23, 1883-October 9, 1895, May 6, June 3, July 1, November 4, December 9, 1885; March 7, December 20, 1887; January 14, February 18, March 25, 1889.

<sup>3</sup>Leon County, Florida, Deed Records, Deed Book CC, pp. 351, 433-35.

<sup>4</sup>Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, Sanborn Maps of Tallahassee (New York, 1890-1926), 1890 and 1895 editions.

<sup>5</sup>William F. Jacobs, "Water from Cornfield to State Capitol," typescript photocopy (Tallahassee, n.d.), pp. 3, 3a.

<sup>6</sup>Tallahassee, Florida, City Council, Minute Book for February 23, 1883-October 8, 1895, June 7, 1890.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., May 13, 1891; March 3, April 7, 1892.

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., April 6, April 24, June 5, 1893; February 1, 1894;  
September 12, 1895.

<sup>9</sup>Tallahassee, Florida, City Council, Minute Book for October 10,  
1895 - June 2, 1903, July 13, October 2, 1899; Minute Book for January 13,  
1903 - December 30, 1907, October 13, 1904, September 13, 1906.

<sup>10</sup>Tallahassee, Florida, City Council, Minute Book for January 1,  
1908 - December 31, 1912, June 4, 1910; Jacobs, "Water from Cornfield  
to State Capitol," pp. 4-5.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 5-8; John B. Miller, Chairman, Historical Studies  
in Florida Committee, Florida Chapter, American Water Works Association,  
to Mildred L. Fryman, personal communication, April, 1976.

<sup>12</sup>Jacobs, "From Cornfield to State Capitol," pp. 9-12.

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Item Number 9 (cont.), p. 1

Jacobs, William F. "Water from Cornfield to State Capitol." Typescript  
photocopy. Tallahassee, n.d.

Leon County, Florida. Deed Records. Book CC. Located in Leon County  
Courthouse, Tallahassee, Florida.

Sanborn Map and Publishing Company. Sanborn Maps of Tallahassee. New  
York: Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, 1890-1926.

Tallahassee, Florida. City Council. Minute Books for February 23, 1883  
through October 9, 1895; October 10, 1895 through June 2, 1903;  
January 13, 1903 through December 30, 1907; January 1, 1908 through  
December 31, 1912.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Division of Archives, History and Records Management. Tallahassee Capitol Center Survey: Report. Miscellaneous Project Report Series No. 30. Tallahassee, 1975.

(Continued)

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than 1

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 76.1420 3.37010.10  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B           
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

D         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

West half of Lot 27 and West 148 feet of Lot 30 of the Original Plan of Tallahassee.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

John Scafidi, Historian

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management 10/5/78

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Department of State, The Capitol

(904) 487-2333

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Tallahassee

Florida 32304

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER.

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



February 15, 1979

City of Tallahassee  
City Hall  
Tallahassee, Florida 32304

Ref: Old City Waterworks

Dear Sirs:

It is a pleasure to advise you that the referenced property has been officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A certificate of ~~formal~~ notification of the recognition given to this site is now being prepared. If at all possible, Secretary of State, George Firestone, will be in contact with you concerning a mutually acceptable time and place for presentation of the certificate.

With every good wish and warm regard.

Sincerely,

L. Ross Morrell  
Deputy State Historic  
Preservation Officer

LRM:Sdc

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE FLORIDA

Date Entered      JAN 31 1979

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Old City Waterworks	Tallahassee Leon County

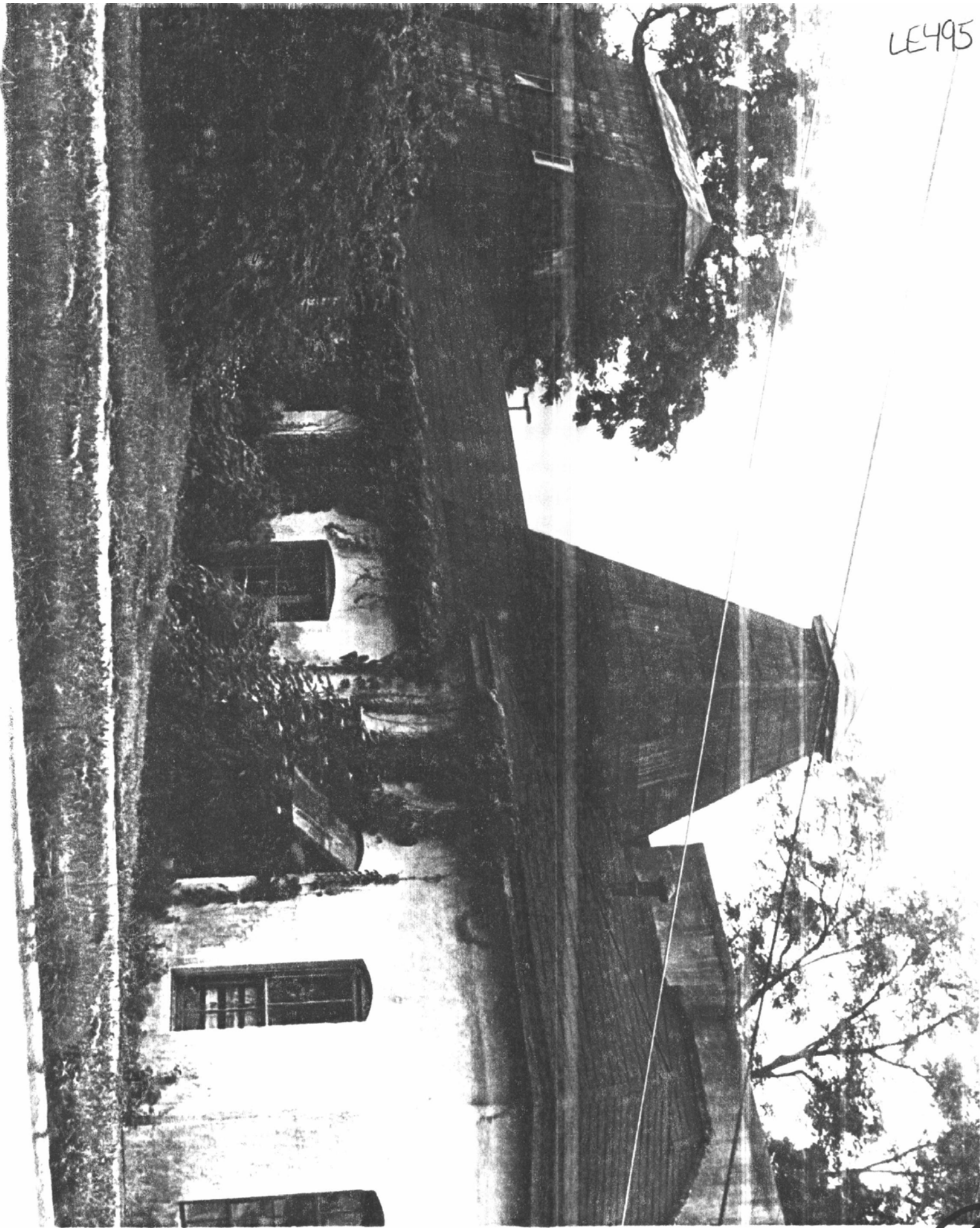
Also Notified

Honorable Richard (Dick) Stone  
Honorable Lawton Chiles  
Honorable Don Fuqua

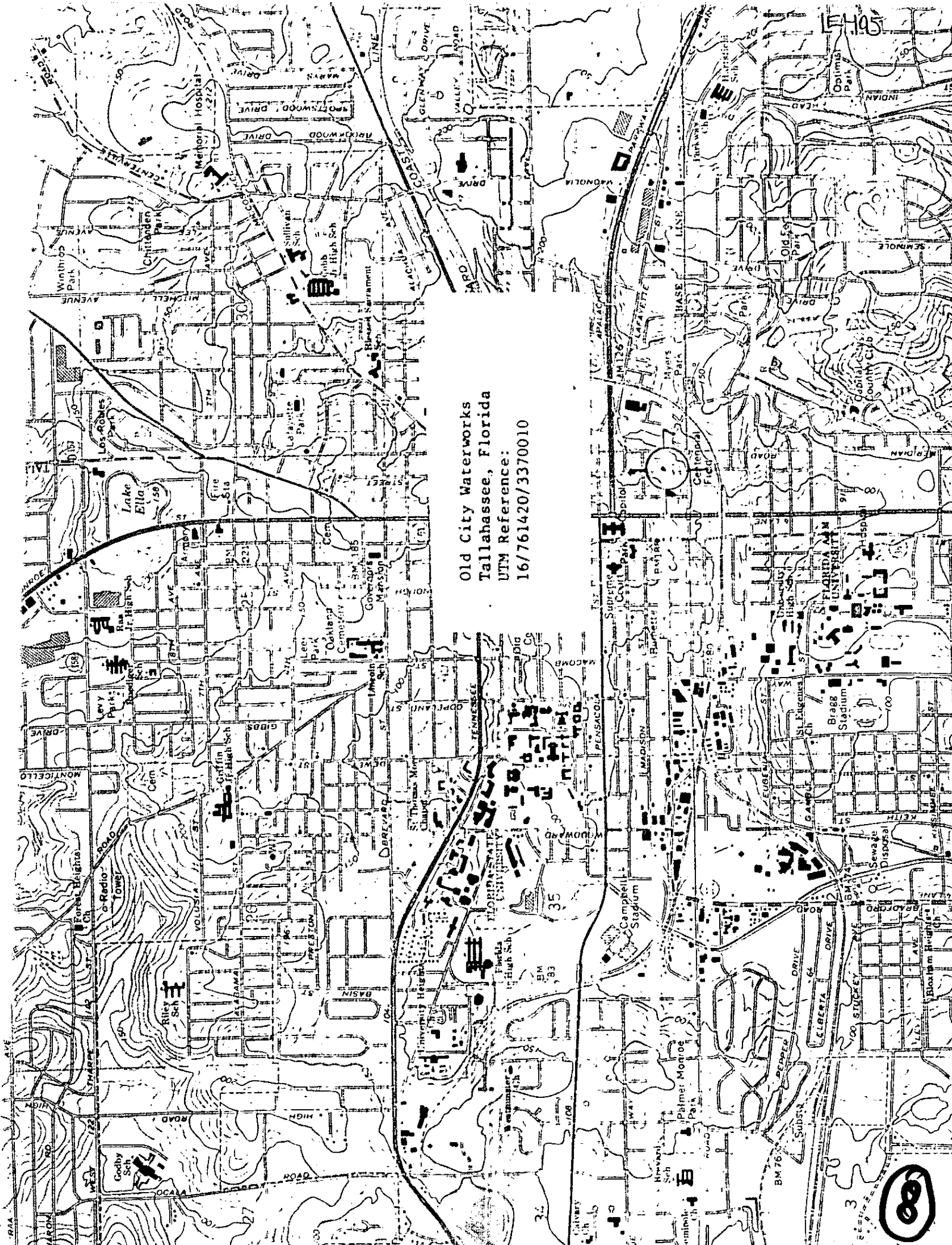
**COPY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.

LE495







Old City Waterworks  
Tallahassee, Florida  
UTM Reference:  
16/761420/3370010

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